

The background features a vibrant green color palette. On the left, there are numerous light green circular splatters of varying sizes. On the right, there are overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of green, creating a layered effect. The overall aesthetic is modern and organic.

Autoethnography, digitalisation and professional identity

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My practitioner research

- ▶ Careers Adviser at Cardiff University, graduated from MA in Career Development and Management at Coventry University in September 2021
- ▶ Research project for MA dissertation
- ▶ Interested in professional identity (transition from student-graduate and in job role) and also reflecting on the impact on this of working completely remotely for most of the pandemic

- ▶ *How has digitalisation impacted on my professional identity, as a trainee career practitioner within higher education?*

- ▶ Professional identity an “important facet in times of change and transition” (Neary, 2011: 40)

Autoethnography

- ▶ The researcher is also the research *subject*
- ▶ “offers a way of giving voice to personal experience to advance sociological understanding” (Wall, 2008: 39)
- ▶ Controversial research method
 - ▶ Personal! “*the ever-present voice that says isn’t this just self-indulgent nonsense?*” (Muncey, 2010: 86)
- ▶ Ethical approval sought from university
- ▶ Utilised a method that could be useful for practitioner researchers as it requires the “reflective stance” (Gough, 2017: 193)
- ▶ Not generalisable

Discussion and reflection

- ▶ Digitalisation interacts with key elements of my professional identity and is **connected both to my confidence and (perceived) competence**
- ▶ **Access to huge volumes of easily and readily available online CPD opportunities can be overwhelming - future research needed** (Yates, 2014; Bimrose and Brown, 2019)
- ▶ **Depth of interest in professional identity**, connected to my PG qualification - “undertaking appropriate initial qualifications and subsequent CPD is an essential factor in becoming and remaining a consciously competent professional practitioner” (Allan and Moffat, 2016: 452)

Personal and professional impact

- ▶ Developed research skills and knowledge about a new research method
- ▶ Refined skills needed for research and as a career practitioner i.e. self-awareness, reflection, better understanding of professional identity and being able to advocate for the profession
- ▶ Interest in possible future research - particularly in continuing professional development, how digitalisation has impacted on this and how career practitioners in all sectors choose to engage with this
- ▶ Submitted a proposal for and was shortlisted for the Bill Law Award 2022
- ▶ Joined the AGCAS Phoenix Editorial Group as a voluntary member

References

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- ▶ Wall, S. (2008) 'Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, pp 38-53
- ▶ Yates, J. (2014) 'Synchronous online CPD: empirical support for the value of webinars in career settings' *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp 245-260